

WAVERLEY RAILWAY (SCOTLAND) BILL COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 February 2004
(Morning)

Session 2

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WAVERLEY RAILWAY (SCOTLAND) BILL COMMITTEE

1st Meeting 2004, Session 2

OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER

*Mr Ted Brocklebank (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

Committee members

*Gordon Jackson (Glasgow Govan) (Lab)

*Tricia Marwick (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP)

*Christine May (Central Fife) (Lab)

Mike Pringle (Edinburgh South) (LD)

*attended

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Callum Thomson

SENIOR ASSISTANT CLERK

Fergus Cochrane

LOCATION

Committee Room 4

Scottish Parliament

Waverley Railway (Scotland) Bill Committee

Tuesday 10 February 2004

(Morning)

[THE OLDEST COMMITTEE MEMBER *opened the meeting at 09:30*]

Mr Ted Brocklebank (Oldest Committee Member): We are quorate, as three members are present. I was going to say that this is a senior moment, because the deeply depressing fact is that, of those present, I appear to be the most senior, at least in terms of age.

Interests

09:30

Mr Brocklebank: My first duty is to ask the members present whether they have any interests to declare.

Tricia Marwick (Mid Scotland and Fife) (SNP): I have no interests to declare.

Christine May (Central Fife) (Lab): I have no interests to declare other than that I have been involved in the preparation of plans relating to the reopening of the rail line to Leven in Fife, which may be an interest.

Mr Brocklebank: The clerk will take that on board. I have no interests to declare and I am erring on the side of caution, which we have been advised to do.

Convener

09:31

Mr Brocklebank: We move to the next item on the agenda. As I understand it, the convener of the committee is to be chosen from the Scottish National Party.

We now have one more member present than the number needed for a quorum, as Gordon Jackson has just joined us. That is splendid. We had moved on from agenda item 1, under which I asked members to declare interests. Have you any interests to declare, Gordon?

Gordon Jackson (Glasgow Govan) (Lab): No. I do not think that I have any interests that would affect a railway bill.

Mr Brocklebank: Right.

We move back to item 2. Gordon Jackson came in just in the nick of time. I had explained to members that the convener of the committee is to be chosen from the Scottish National Party. We appear to have only one member of that party here. I seek nominations for convener of the committee.

Christine May: I am pleased to nominate Tricia Marwick.

Tricia Marwick was chosen as convener.

The Convener (Tricia Marwick): Thank you very much. I look forward to working with you all.

Deputy Convener

09:33

The Convener: The Parliament has said that the deputy convener of the committee will be a member of the Labour Party. I seek nominations for the deputy convener.

Gordon Jackson: I nominate Christine May.

Christine May was chosen as deputy convener.

Item in Private

09:34

The Convener: Under item 4, we must consider whether we wish to take item 5 in private. Item 5 is consideration of our approach to the preliminary stage of the bill and the appointment of the committee adviser. Do members agree that that item should be taken in private?

Mr Brocklebank: I am on record as saying in other committees that items should be taken in private only when that is absolutely necessary, but I am open to persuasion that it might be necessary to take item 5 in private.

Gordon Jackson: I have always had some sympathy for the view that we take too much in private, but there are two points to consider. First, under item 5 we are not deciding anything of substance to do with the nature of the bill; we are simply deciding when we are going to meet. There might be genuinely private reasons for people not being able to do things on certain days. Secondly, I always think that we should pick our advisers in private, because it could be invidious to their professional life if things about them were discussed publicly. That would not be fair to the advisers. I do not see why that sort of thing should not be taken in private, although I take Ted Brocklebank's general point.

Christine May: I do not disagree with much of that. I agree that discussions about the appointment of an adviser should be taken in private. However, I think that discussions on our approach to our meetings and when we might meet could be taken in public.

Mr Brocklebank: I agree with that view.

The Convener: We are agreed that we will take item 5 in private. I ask members of the public, the official report and broadcasting staff to leave the room.

09:35

Meeting continued in private until 09:52.

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